



Studies in Literature and Language
Vol. 10, No. 1, 2015, pp. 81-84
DOI: 10.3968/6246

ISSN 1923-1555[Print]
ISSN 1923-1563[Online]
www.cscanada.net
www.cscanada.org

On Personality Development of Connie in D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* From Tripartite Theory in Freud's Psychoanalysis

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Received 1 November 2014; accepted 27 December 2014
Published online 26 January 2015

Abstract

Lady Chatterley's Lover is D.H.Lawrence's most debatable works. In this novel, we can find transformation of the personality of the heroine, Connie. To have a better view of how she develops her personality, we will apply Freudian psychoanalytic approach to the gradual changes of her character. The significance of this analysis lies in that through understanding of the personality development of the heroine, we can grasp the essence of Lawrence's philosophical ideal of "balance of two sexes" in relation to its surroundings, the healing effects of harmonious relationship between men and women in the distorted industrialized society.

Key words: D.H.Lawrence; *Lady Chatterley's Lover*; Freudian psychoanalytical approach; Personality development

Zheng, C. (2015). On Personality Development of Connie in D.H.Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* From Tripartite Theory in Freud's Psychoanalysis. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 10(1), 81-84. Available from: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sll/article/view/6246>
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/6246>

INTRODUCTION

Lady Chatterley's Lover is D.H.Lawrence's most debatable works. After being banned for many years, it comes to the public's view again. In general, it shows us a fundamental question about being bound by a distorted marriage or setting oneself free for the pursuit of true love. To probe it deeper, we can find it is a book quintessentially about

human nature. The heroine, Connie, usually we call it lady Chatterley, provides us with an insight into the relationship between men and women in the 19th century England, especially in the process of industrialization. According to D.H. Lawrence, industrialization, though brings people with material wealth, distorts people's relationship to some extent. Considering this, Lawrence advocates a balance between two sexes. True love may be the best therapy for psychological problems of men in an industrialized and sophisticated environment. This novel is written with a big outlook on industrialized England, and the personality development of Connie through Freudian psychoanalysis, to be specific, his tripartite theory about personality development, enables us to catch a glimpse of the whole picture.

1. LITERARY REVIEW

Tracking back to the research on D.H.Lawrence's works, we can find Freudian psychoanalysis have been applied to readings of the works (Weiss, 1962; Wright, 1989; Fernihough, 2003). They set out the history of psychological and psychoanalytic approaches to Lawrence. The novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is a particular case.

Sexual motive is what psychoanalysis touches frequently. Lawrence's recognition of women's sexuality in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* was advanced for his time-even liberating. A psychoanalytical reading of the Lady Chatterley eroticism in D.H.Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover* is based on Freud's theory of the three stages in the development of infantile sexuality (Doherty, 1998).

The character, Connie is also a case of psychoanalysis of the relationship between self and society. Connie, nearly destroyed by subjection to the oedipal law-logos of the father, returns to the pre- oedipal mirror to observe the damage done to her bodily identity. Connie's hatred constitutes a self and social criticism that facilitates the

breakdown of her old mode of consciousness, thus further preparing her for a new one (Burack, 1997).

As regards to *Lady Chatterley* in this novel, the researches focus on the following aspects: her sexual desires from being hidden in her unconsciousness to the gradual exposure in her consciousness; the romance between Connie and Mellors; the regeneration of her body and spirit from the dynamics with Mellors. Then the analysis lead further to the psychological questions: the relationship between man and woman, and also self and the society. Connie's relationship with Mellors reveals Lawrence's ethics of two sexes, which can be described as the harmony reached between them through ritual love affair (concerning mythological and archetypal approach) based on "Blood Consciousness".

But some researches above sound mystical, for example, about "Blood Consciousness". The researchers seem to be very ideal for proposing this term without offering specific evidence on how so called "Blood Consciousness" works to give Connie a new birth, both physically and mentally.

Others' limitations may pave a way for us to better apply psychoanalytical theory to this novel. The following parts will give an in-depth investigation into the personality of Connie from psychoanalytical point of view.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The 21st century has witnesses the coming out of an array of psychological study methodologies. Among them the most outstanding branch of study is Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis. It lays out the foundation for the studying of our conceptions of human behavior by pushing beyond the tradition to new realms of psyche such as wish fulfillment, sexuality, unconsciousness, etc..

His starting point is the unconscious aspects of the human psyche. By emphasizing the importance of the unconscious mind, he notes that there are basically three parts of the human psyche, though seemingly independent, still interrelated. They are the conscious, the subconscious, and the pre-conscious. The conscious part only constitutes a tip of an iceberg, while the subconscious is deep under the surface. The pre-conscious is ready to come out of the surface to become part of the conscious. The conscious will soon become latent, though they can easily become conscious again (Freud, 1964, p.101). What's more, his another major premise (Freud, 1964) is that because of the social forbidden labels attached to certain sexual impulses, many of our desires and memories are constrained into a safe box. Principal among the terms of Freudian psychoanalysis is his tripartite theory of human psyche: the id, the ego and the superego. The id is the container of libido, the primary source of all psychic energy and the driving

force of the "iceberg". It functions according to the pleasure principle, to satisfy our primordial desires. The ego is the rational governing agent of psyche. Though a large portion of the ego is unconscious, the ego nevertheless comprises what we ordinarily think of as the conscious mind. Whereas the id is governed solely by the pleasure principle, the ego is controlled by the rationality principle. The other regulation agent, to protect society is the superego. The superego is the moral judge, as Freud says (1964, p.95) the "representative of all moral restrictions, the advocate of the impulse toward perfection, in short, it is as much as we have been able to apprehend psychologically of what people call the 'higher' things in human life." Acting either directly through the ego, the superego serves to repress or inhibit the drives of the id, to block off and thrust back into the unconscious those impulses toward pleasure that society regards as unacceptable, such as overt aggression, sexual passion, and the Oedipal instinct. Anxiety is the warfare between the id and the superego.

3. STUDY METHODOLOGY

Psychological theory is commonly used as an interpretive tool by modern critics. Psychological criticism is a diverse category, but it often employs three approaches (Gloa & Gwynn, 2006, p.887). First, it investigates the creative process of the arts: What is the nature of literary genius, and how does it relate to normal mental functions? Second, it involves the psychological study of a particular artist. Most modern literary biographies employ psychology to understand their subject's motivations and behavior. Third, it is the analysis of fictional characters. Freud's study of Oedipus is the prototype for this approach, which tries to bring modern insights about human behavior into the study of how fictional people act. Psychoanalytic theory is closely related to literature study, as Freud admitted that he himself has learned a great deal about psychology from studying literature.

4. DISCUSSION

Connie was married to Clifford Chatterley, an invalid from the First World War. Though she was later bestowed the title *Lady Chatterley*, and lived in a grand house in Wragby, she had something which seemed to miss from her life forever.

Before the marriage, she had freedom, love experience, especially the pleasure gained from her love affairs as "a queer vibrating thrill inside the body, a final spasm of self-assertion", but in the marriage life, her disabled husband could never give her any physical pleasure. We noticed that Connie was a woman from a decent family, a young lady who breathed in arts

in Rome and France, but she herself was undoubtedly unhappy in her marriage life. The pre-conscious is ready to come out of the surface to become part of the conscious. The conscious will soon become latent, though they can easily become conscious again (Freud, 1964, p.101). The conscious mind usually is representative of what's hiding beneath the sea, the huge amount of energy restrained within the unconscious mind. This can speak for Connie's case. At the beginning of her marriage life, she was tolerable in Clifford's view on marriage as a forever spiritual bond between man and woman. But when some young intellectuals at Clifford's home exchanged ideas about marriage and love affairs, Connie remained silent, but really enjoyed these men's talk. In her unconsciousness, she began to be aware of the pleasure missing from her current life.

This searching for pleasure was emphasized by her first meeting with Mellors. It was in the woods, which Clifford called "the Heart of England" (symbolic of human nature, the undisturbed unconsciousness), that Connie met her lover. As psychologist Calvin S. Hall points out that the power of instinctual desires fulfills the id (the basic human psyche in Freudian psychoanalysis) through stimulus activity and wish fulfillment. In other words, the outpouring of feelings in an imaginative way can satisfy id. A vivid example is that when Connie saw Mellors taking a bath, she had a shock, though she thought it was merely a man washing himself, commonplace enough, but "yet in some curious way it was a visionary experience: it had hit her in the middle of the alone overwhelmed her. Her desire for him was satisfied in the visionary encounter with the beauty of the man's body".

As Freudian theory suggests that repressed desires or sexual impulses would lead to outburst or neurosis. We can see that something echoed inside Connie: "Give me the democracy of touch, the resurrection of the body" (LCL74), but she didn't at all know what it meant, but it comforted her, that was her longing for real love and touch. Her repressed psychic energy or "libido" (a Freudian term) thus smothered, grew up within her, coming up from the unconsciousness to the consciousness, and finally led to her love affair with Mellors, who was seemingly a detached and mysterious one, but with suppressed desires within his inward self.

Because of the social forbidden labels attached to certain sexual impulses, many of our desires and memories are constrained into a safe box. The taboo in this novel is that Connie was an upper class lady, yet Mellors only a game-keeper, a servant in Wragby. The public law constructed a gap between them, not to be trespassed. Their own social status acts as superegos to forbid their behaviors.

This can explain why Connie's conscience was troubled after she had an affair with Mellors.

She was not even free, for Clifford must have her there. He seemed to have a nervous terror that she should leave him. The curious pulpy part of him, the emotional and humanly-individual part, depended on her... She must be there, there at Wragby, a lady Chatterley, his wife. (LCL100)

The superego, a moral judge, mainly serves as an agent protecting our society, has its influence upon the ego which puts Connie in a dilemma. The moral censoring function of superego is further provoked in the later story between Connie and Mellors. When Connie heard the "scandal" of Mellors- his wife's coming back to meddle in the affairs and sending heavy rebuke to Mellors about his "disloyalty", she felt her superego being stung, because she had already had his child. The quick reaction coming to her mind to solve his problem was to find a scapegoat for him. That is, according to psychoanalysis, when a crisis occurs, the ego will find a certain way to protect the superego," the repository of conscience and pride" (Guerin, 2004, p.130). In the end of the story, though in Connie's eyes, the bond of love with Mellors was ill to lose, she could not just go away with him. It was only through divorce, the legal dissolution of Mellors' marriage and her own marriage, the social compliance acting as a superego could bring her and him finally together.

CONCLUSION

Psychological analysis considers conscious and unconscious thought, dream, sexuality, repression and the romance of the family, the dynamics between husband and wife and children, etc. This paper has used psychoanalytical approach to investigate the heroine, Connie in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* by observing her changing emotional conditions, her romance with Mellors, her marriage status, and her question of herself and the society. The Freudian theory about mankind's consciousness and unconsciousness serves as the starting point, furthermore, his theory of the tripartite of the human psyche: Id, ego and superego provides a more clearly theoretical framework for us to apply to the analysis of Connie's personality.

The significance of using Freud's theory: tripartite of human psyche leads us into the unconsciousness world of Connie, especially, how her id, ego and superego interacts with one another, resulting in the breakdown of her old mode of consciousness, the affective emotional life with Mellors, and the regeneration and renewal of herself, both physically and mentally.

This kind of psychoanalysis based on the tripartite theory is better than some metaphysical point of view. For metaphysical analysis, it sounds mystical and erudite for common readers, but tripartite theory is easier to grasp and more suitable for us to apply to the analysis of other characters beyond this novel.

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